

distribution has probably come about chiefly through the subsequent slow but sure encroachments of climax vegetation, on all the better soils.

COLLEGE POINT, L. I.

A TRIP TO JAMAICA IN SUMMER

BY ELIZABETH G. BRITTON

Starting for Jamaica on the twenty-fourth of August, after ten weeks of hot, dry weather in New York, does not seem to be an ideal way of spending a vacation ; but the voyage there and back on the fine large steamships of the Royal Mail and three weeks in the open air collecting were a welcome and beneficial experience. Wakened at dawn by the rockets signalling for a pilot, it was a beautiful sight to see those glorious Blue Mountains loom dark and mysterious with the comet faintly visible above them, and to watch the change of colors on the water and hills as each familiar land-mark came into view. Since our last visit, the earthquake had laid Kingston in ruins ; the cocoanuts at the end of the Port Royal peninsula stood in twenty feet of water and the wrecked steamships of the Hamburg-American line lay on the beach with their tragic history still unfinished. But as we neared our dock, it was but a step "from the sublime to the ridiculous," for there were those same negro boys diving for pennies, exactly as if nothing had happened. Kingston never was a picturesque city and it compared unfavorably with the capitals of any of the larger West Indian Islands ; but it has now the dignity of sorrow and the hope of renovation. Many of the business streets are still a mass of tangled ruins, for the new shops are being built on vacant lots away from the water front. We found the trolleys and railroads running as usual and comfortable accommodations at the Constant Spring Hotel. We spent the day after our arrival at the Hope Botanical Gardens, where the blossoms of the *Poinciana* sprinkled the ground with red and the humming-birds darted in and out of the arbors of *Thunbergia grandiflora* ; and we left by rail for Williamsfield early the following morning, reaching there in time to drive to Mandeville and



FIGURE 1. *Sabal unbraculifera* near Malvern, Jamaica.

do some collecting. Mandeville lies at an elevation of about 1,800 feet in a hilly region and is much frequented by tourists. There are several good hotels and many fine drives, as well as a

cool and comfortable climate. Wooded hills afford good collecting, and even the roadsides yield interesting species of orchids, bromeliads, mistletoes, and ferns.

But our destination was the Santa Cruz Mountains, where Purdie collected in 1843-44, in order to search for several long-lost species, so we secured a driver and carriage at Mandeville and the following afternoon reached Malvern Hill, where we were joined by Mr. Fawcett and Mr. Harris, whose kind assistance did much to make our trip successful. There is a land-mark on Malvern Hill, a palm eighty feet high, *Sabal umbraculifera*, with swallows darting around its crown of leaves and epiphytes growing on its trunk. All around are pimento trees, the berries of which were ripe, and the fragrance of allspice, drying on the barbecues, scented the air. We spent ten days here very comfortably, making trips both north and south along the ridge at elevations of 2,100-2,700 feet. At Potsdam there is a large school for boys with a private bit of natural woodland, where was found a very rare tree, *Peltostigma ptelioides*, and the star-shaped seedlings of one of the mistletoes, probably *Psittacanthus polyceps*. At Stanmore Hill was found another rare tree, seventy-two feet high, *Spathelia glabrescens*, recalling the "Pride of the Valley," *S. simplex*, which we had seen last year for the first time near Gordon Town. The stem in both species is slender and unbranched, with a crown of long pinnate leaves and a large panicle of brilliant pink flowers at the summit. One trip was made to the southeastern end of the ridge at Yardley Chase, where there is a magnificent view of the ocean from an elevation of 1,600 feet, at one point known as "Lover's Leap." The proprietor, Mr. Pantton Forbes, offered us the use of his seaside cottage at Great Pedro Bay, where Dr. Britton and Mr. Harris camped out one night in a search for the long-lost cactus, *Mamillaria simplex*. Plenty of the Turk's-cap and several tall branching species of *Cereus* and *Pilocereus* as well as *Opuntia* were found, making a weird growth among the logwoods back of the sand dunes.

Leaving Malvern Hill for Black River, we descended to the sea-coast again and trips were made to the "honey-comb rocks" at Longacre and Luana Points in search of another palm with

prickly petioles recorded by Grisebach as *Copernicia tectorum*. This also was unsuccessful, though plenty of the silver-thatch palm was found at Ackendown. One of the special features of the trip was a drive to Lacovia, where through the courtesy of Mr. H. M. Farquharson fine specimens of a *Nelumbium* with yellow flowers were obtained. It is supposed to be the same as *N. luteum*, our wild yellow lotus of the United States, but its seeds are pointed at both ends, instead of round, and it has been called *N. jamaicense* DC. It was formerly more abundant than it is now, having been reported from several other stations on the island. Two trips also were made by boat up Black River, where several interesting trees and vines were found. The lowlands of this part of the island are filled with morasses and one unusual palm was obtainable only by wading in and sending a boy up for the leaves and fruit.

The last week of our stay was spent at New Market in the hills of Westmoreland, where the climate is more humid, fogs are frequent at night, and the mosses and ferns, in consequence, are more abundant. The road leading to Montego Bay was traversed twice and yielded an interesting epiphytic cactus of the genus *Rhipsalis* and one of the Gesneriaceae. Another visit during the winter would give a still richer harvest as the rainy season was beginning when we were there, making collecting and drying of plants a difficult matter. The region around Bluefields, also, where Gosse collected so many of the birds of Jamaica would repay further exploration.

We had intended to spend a week at the eastern end of the island, but having read Inspector Thomas's account of it in "Untrodden Jamaica" and learning from the government engineers that it rains three hundred days of the year and the other sixty-five it pours in the John Crow Mountains, which are known as the "Watering Pot of Jamaica," we concluded that it would be better to postpone our trip to them till we were specially prepared and await a more favorable season.

Altogether about 2,000 specimens were secured for the New York Botanical Garden.